



EPA New England joins the New England states and their local communities in a Clean Beach initiative.

What is EPA's Beach Initiative?

The goal of the Beach Initiative is to protect public health by reducing the pollution levels that cause beach closures in New England.

Why do we need to reduce pollution at New England's Beaches?

Polluted runoff and untreated sewage can contain bacteria, viruses and protozoa that cause illnesses such as gastroenteritis or hepatitis. Beaches are closed, or advisories posted, when bacteria levels -- which indicate the potential presence of fecal contamination -- exceed acceptable levels. One in four New England freshwater and coastal beaches are closed or posted at least once in a typical year. In the summer of 2005, freshwater and coastal beaches were posted for over 2,000 days at the 1,600 regularly monitored beaches.

How are EPA and the New England states accomplishing this goal?

- EPA has awarded coastal New England states over \$6 million to develop and implement beach monitoring, assessment and public notification programs;
- EPA and state officials are providing technical assistance to communities to identify and control sources of fecal contamination from storm water and other pollutant sources;
- we established "Flagship Beaches," which are high-use beaches selected by each state as models for targeted pollution assessments, enhanced monitoring and improving water quality;
- we promote the use of high quality monitoring and assessment methods and support the investigation of new molecular technologies;
- we promote information sharing among beach managers; and
- we encourage and involve the public and communities in education, monitoring and advocacy.

What has the Beach Initiative accomplished since 2001:

- The number of coastal beaches with water quality monitoring has almost doubled to over 800 beaches.
- All priority coastal beaches in New England have been assessed and potential pollutant sources mapped.
- State and municipal environmental and health agencies have targeted high priority beaches and beaches with chronic water quality problems for more frequent monitoring and allocated resources to identify and eliminate sources of pollutants.
- Water quality has improved at several beaches throughout New England due to remediation of pollution sources.
- Thousands of beach-goers are notified of water quality conditions at their favorite beaches by on-site flags, signs, newspapers, telephone hot lines, and new and improved web sites.



What's Happening at the Flagship and other beaches?

Flagship Beaches 2006		Recent Accomplishments
CT	- Rocky Neck State Park, East Lyme - Ocean Beach Park, New London	CT DPH developed custom software to import laboratory data from beach communities into a state-wide database making reporting more convenient, comprehensive and faster.
ME	- Ferry Beach State Park, Saco - Wells Beach, Wells	Maine Healthy Beaches Program conducted a study with the town of Kennebunkport and state agencies to determine the sources of bacteria that caused beach postings at Goose Rocks Beach in 2005.
MA	- Willows Pier, Salem - Wollaston Beach, Quincy - Ryder Street Beach, Provincetown	MA DPH completed sanitary surveys at all three beaches. Willows Pier and Ryder Street were posted only once in 2005. The City of Quincy and MA DCR are funding improvements to sewer lines and catch basins at Wollaston Beach.
NH	- Hampton Beach State Park	NH Beach Inspection Program established an "Adopt-a-Beach" program at Hampton and other beaches. Volunteers recorded the types of debris and pollution on the beaches and improved informational kiosks.
RI	- Goddard Memorial State Park, Warwick - Warren Town Beach - Scarborough State Beach, Narragansett	In 2006, EPA approved the Greenwich Bay Total Maximum Daily Load analysis that recommends increased enforcement of the boating No Discharge law, and specific storm water and wastewater management actions that will improve water quality at Goddard Beach. Repair of sewer line at Warren Town Beach resulted in reduction of closures from 78 days in 2003 to one day in 2004 and 2005 combined.



You can get involved in local beach improvement programs. Simple things you can do:

- Properly maintain your septic system, pick-up after your dog, do not feed waterfowl;
- encourage the development and implementation of your community's storm water management program (see www.epa.gov/ne/npdes/stormwater/index.html);
- learn about water quality at your favorite beach and contact the local health department to ensure water quality is being monitored and problems are investigated; and
- volunteer to monitor the water at your beach (see www.epa.gov/owow/monitoring/volunteer).



For Beach Water Quality Information:

EPA New England: www.epa.gov/ne/eco/beaches

CT: www.dph.state.ct.us/brs/ehs/recreation/beaches.htm

MA: www.mass.gov/dph/topics/beaches.htm

RI: www.ribeaches.org

EPA National: www.epa.gov/beaches

ME: www.mainehealthybeaches.org

NH: www.des.state.nh.us/beaches

VT: <http://healthyvermont.gov/enviro/water/recwater.aspx>



United States
Environmental Protection
Agency New England

Contact EPA for more information:
liebman.matt@epa.gov 617-918-1626

June 2006
EPA 901-F-06-004